

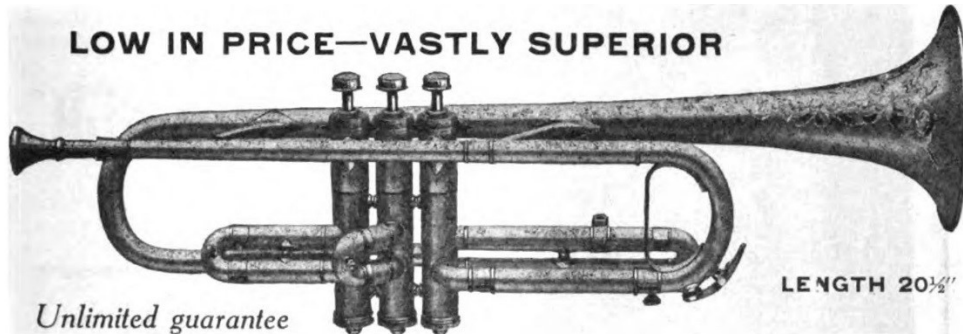
# William Frank Co. Trumpets

Chicago & Barrington

1909 the William Frank company was started this year according to ads in the 1930s so perhaps he was doing this part time while still with Holton

1911 William Frank Co., #542 S. Dearborn, h. #122 E. 56<sup>th</sup>

1916 ad below shows the National model trumpet; the National Band Instrument Co. was incorporated in July of 1915 by Frank but he changed the company name to William Frank Co. in December. The National name was retained for a while as a model.



Here is an accurate photographic likeness of the NATIONAL Trumpet. This remarkable Trumpet belongs to the great line of NATIONAL instruments which have caused more of a stir in the musical world than any other line of instruments ever produced, at any price.

The NATIONAL Trumpet is the final result of years of careful, painstaking research. It was designed slowly, inch by inch, detail by detail, until to-day it stands as the master creation of a man whose vision was clear over thirty years ago, and has worked steadily without letup straight to the goal of Trumpet perfection.

The NATIONAL Trumpet is nothing sensational—it is not an instrument fussed over and doctored up in jig time with a lot of talking points pushed on it—it was not built merely to sell. It was designed to meet every demand of the critical Musician—to satisfy the most exacting—to please the hard-to-please.

It possesses a beautiful solid penetrating Trumpet tone, which is the result of years of concentrated effort by a man who knows.

Working on the principle that accuracy and strength of tone depend largely upon correct proportions and using the finest grade Trumpet brass, we have produced a Trumpet to a degree of perfection hitherto considered an impossibility.

We have made these bold assertions and we would deserve your contempt if such assertions were made without truth behind them. Just let us send you this remarkable Trumpet for six days' trial, compare it with any on the market—regardless of price—test it in any way you wish—then you will quickly understand why we have made these bold assertions. The trial obligates us—not you.

May we send you our catalog No. 4?

**WILLIAM FRANK COMPANY, 229 W. AUSTIN AVENUE, CHICAGO, ILL.**

*Easy monthly  
payments  
if desired*

The lowest serial number trumpet I have found is this Excelsior model with #878; very close in design to the 1916 ad.



1919 Frank builds a new factory on Clybourne St at the corner of Lewis St, Chicago (MTR)

Trumpet #1567, this adds the popular stop rod for Bb/A



Excelsior model #2560



Classic model #2815; this unusual one has a forward 2<sup>nd</sup> valve slide and a 1<sup>st</sup> slide ring



Classic model #3588



Bel Canto model #5501



Intruscala model #5874



Tempertone model #6540



Paramount model #7329



Paramount model #9235



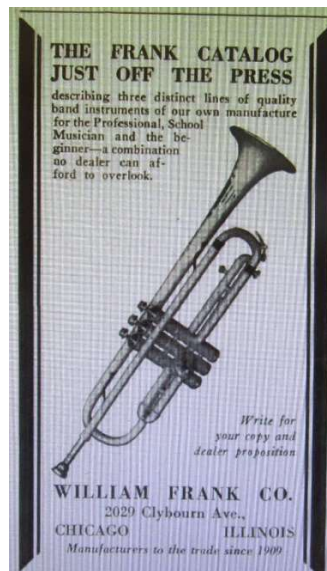
1928 First use of the “Utona” name later registered in 1931 (registration document)

Utona trumpet is a stencil of a Pan American model 34B with the serial #70497 dating it to around 1928-1929. This does not have the Frank name added.



1930 the William Frank Co., #2029-2033 Clybourne, has a 40,000 square foot factory; their new catalog shows the Classic, Excelsior, and Student models (MTR)

1930 ad for their new catalog; this image appears to match best with the earliest Excelsior trumpets which had the band around the mouthpiece socket rather than all later ones with the long one; if true, this would make for a very small output early on



1931 Excelsior trumpet ad

**The World's Greatest  
Trumpet Value . . .**

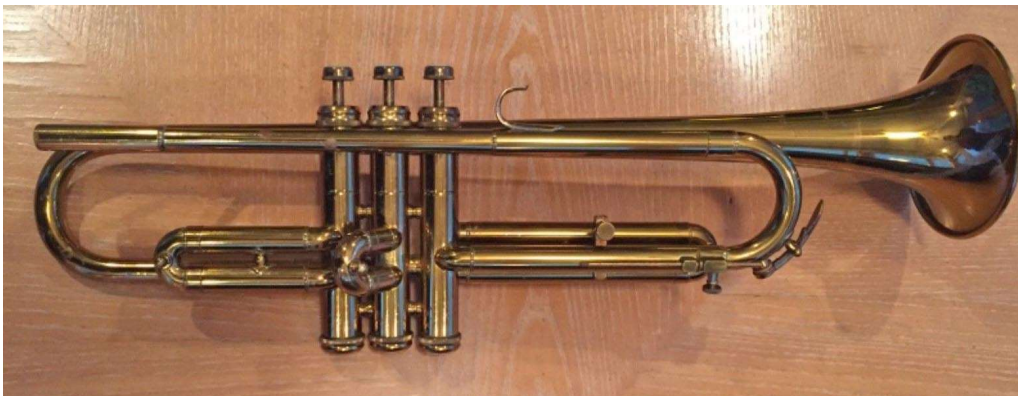
The Excelsior trumpet pictured below was designed and built to meet the demands of the professional at a price within the reach of the school band musician. List \$56.00 silver plated gold bell complete in French style case. The Student trumpet same finish in case \$37.50. Both subject to Dealer discount.

*Write for complete catalog and Dealer proposition.*

**WILLIAM FRANK CO.**  
2029 Clybourn Ave. Chicago, Ill.  
*Manufacturers to the Trade since 1909.*

1934 start of "American Prep" line of student instruments (I cannot find the original source for this); these all use a six-digit serial number starting around 101000

American Prep #102275



American Prep #103016



American Prep #103556



#11004; possibly Artist model



Biltmore model #11100 with 0.438" bore



Artist model #11382



The trumpets often have this distinctive Frank mouthpiece



Artist model #11892 c.1938



#12633



Americana model with unknown serial number; made in Chicago



1945 Barrington plant opens; cornet serial numbers change around 12000; trumpet serial numbers around 14000; American Prep cornets change around 108000; trumpets around 104000.

American Prep #106xxx



Biltmore model #111xxx



Biltmore model #112150; 0.462" bore & 4-9/16" diameter bell

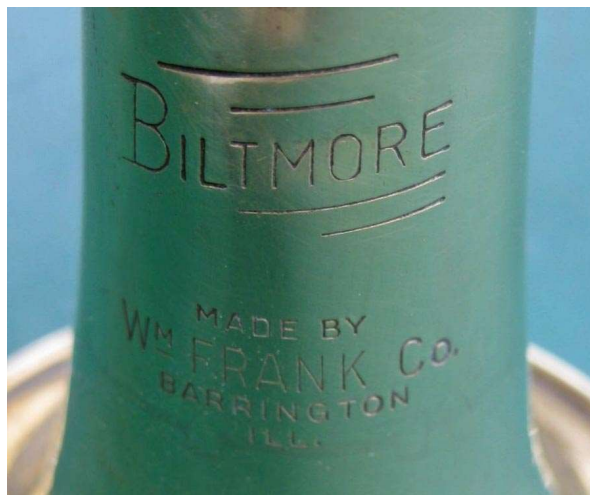


Typical case for this period





Biltmore #112150 bell



Classic model #14456 c.1950



1951 Trumpet ad showing three available models

<p><b>WILLIAM FRANK "CLASSIC" B<math>\flat</math> TRUMPET</b></p> 	<p><b>WILLIAM FRANK "STANDARD" B<math>\flat</math> TRUMPET</b></p> 	<p><b>WILLIAM FRANK "AMERICAN PREP" B<math>\flat</math> TRUMPET</b></p> 
<p>In every detail, the master creation of master workmen. Specially tempered bell. Chrome-plated pistons, Hand-fitted slides. Micro-finished valves. Nickel-silver slides and trimmings. Perfectly proportioned mouthpipe—all adding up to a superb trumpet unsurpassed in appearance, intonation and laying ease, with a crisp, clear, true trumpet tone. There is no finer trumpet made. Brass lacquered, nickel trim. List 158.50. No. M3-110C. Dealer's, each 106.33. Less 2% net..... <b>104.20</b></p>	<p>You'll be surprised, when you examine this trumpet, that so much real quality can be bought at so moderate a price. The Frank "Standard" Trumpet is a professional trumpet in every sense of the word, carefully designed and precision-built to thrill the amateur and please the pro. It's perfectly balanced—easy to hold. That Frank mark is a guarantee of rich, true trumpet tone. Clear brass lacquered finish. List 127.50. No. M3-210A. Dealer's, each 85.00. Less 2% net..... <b>83.30</b></p>	<p>A wide model trumpet, with a long, graceful appearance, perfectly balanced, has a tone of remarkable beauty and brilliancy. The ideal trumpet for beginners and amateurs. Exceptional value. Fully guaranteed. Dimension: 20" long, 4 1/2" bell diameter. Gold lacquer finish. List 90.00. No. M3-410D. Dealer's, each 60.00. Less 2% net..... <b>58.80</b></p>

Classic model #15160 is one of the highest five-digit numbers found; c.1955; this shares many design features with the earlier Artist model. I picked this up in 2018 and found it to have some original quality control issues. The valves had been given a chrome plating that was flaking off, the bottom inner slide tube was so long that they left a loose piece inside in order to close the gap and still be able to remove the slide before it hit the bell, and the tuning for all valved notes was flat, requiring a shortening of all three slides to bring it into proper tune. This has a bell diameter of 4-9/16", a 0.462" bore and is 19" long. There is an engraving of a small castle on the bell.



1956 The company was dissolved and equipment sold to Schilke.

Frank was one of many early makers who sold “stencil” instruments to other retailers. This “Dvorak Professional - Chicago” trumpet is a Frank design with serial #456x.



Frank Classic model #7901 from the late 1930s (author’s photo).



Compared to this John Parduba Supratone #7578 from the same era. This has Frank valves and slides but a different bell (author’s photo).

